

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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RABBI BEN EZRA.

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in his hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all,
nor be afraid." . . .

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy; to solely seek and find and feast;
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men;
Irks care the cropfull bird? Frets doubt the
maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I
must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand, but go!

Be our joys three parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never
grudge the throe.

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail;
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not
sink i' the scale.

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the
whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry "All good things
Are ours; nor soul helps flesh more, now,
than flesh helps soul!"

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute; a god though in
the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to
indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;
Be the fire ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame:
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know,
being old.

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act;
Fancies that broke through language and
escaped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the
pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our
clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past
gone, seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand
sure;
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops; Potter and
clay endure.

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, would'st fain
arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently
impressed.

What though the earlier grooves
That ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about the rim,
Sculled-things in order grim
Grow out, in braver mood, obey the sterner
stress?

Look not thou down, but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash, and trumpet's
peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what
needst thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moulded men;
And since, not even while the whirl was
worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake
thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work!
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past
the aim!
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death com-
plete the same!

—Robert Browning.

A NEW YEAR'S SERMON.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me,
bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget
not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who
healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from de-
struction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and ten-
der mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so
that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*—PSALM ciii. 1-5.

When we look backward, young or old,
on all the days we have lived through, on
the years which image in their seasons our
little life from the springtide of youth to
the winter of age, it is hard to avoid asking
ourselves the question: "What have we
lost, what have we gained in the years gone
by?"

What we have lost we know too well; what
we have gained we do not know so well. It
has not as yet stood the test of life. Only
when the strife has proved our new tools
shall we know whether we have them, or
but seemed to have them.

Yet, when we look back, we are ready to say
that we have gained much. We have got a
keener insight into our business, and can do
it more quickly and more profitably. We
know more of the best ways to get on in our
profession. We have enlarged our sphere
of action in politics. We have read and
experimented so much that our knowledge
of the science we follow is largely increased.
Our hand is quicker as an artist, and our pen
more ready as a writer. The whole business
of life is easier. Yes, we have gained much,
and it is not to be denied that it is gain. But
is that enough? Are we satisfied? Is it
sufficient to be a good machine? Is the out-
ward all we care for? Is the business of life
and the doing of it all in all? Unless there
is something more, will even the business
continue to be well done?

For my part, I believe that, unless the spiri-
tual and the imaginative are developed in us,
unless these parts of our nature which do not
directly influence our worldly life, are also
trained to reach their full development, noth-
ing we do, not even business, is done as well
as it might be done. Certainly, worldly
success alone leaves a man incomplete. If
the life of the soul, of the vital being at the
root of all outward life, has not also gained
new means of living, we are not much better
than excellent machines, able to work, but
unable to originate new work.

The being that we bring into the move-
ment of mankind; the character we build
within and shape into outward act; the
ideas we have gained as the abiding motives
of life; the emotions which flow from those
ideas and the powers by which they urge us;
the principles which in the conscience have

The heart has a deeper wisdom than the
head. Its faith, its hope, and its love pre-
dict and assure a better future than the mere
intellect can foresee.—James Freeman Clarke.

become moral passions; the way in which we have assimilated and transformed into our own personality all we have learned, all that circumstance has brought us; the capacities within, by which we throw into form all we believe, admire, hope, imagine, and love; the motives by which we determine the paths which, out of many presented to us, we will take in business, in politics, in science and in art,—these are of infinitely more importance to us than all that we have gained in our business, than all the knowledge we have stored up, than all the systems of religion, philosophy, and science that we have mastered.

Again, from what we have learned and experienced we have made the tools of life. It was needful that we should forge them and possess them. But how we are using them, what we are doing with them, whether they are doing work by which man will be blessed or cursed, and we ourselves ennobled or degraded, depends on what we are within; on all that makes up character; on the ideas, motives, faiths, and hopes which sit as kings and queens and counsellors in our soul, and command and forbid, organize and think, feel and imagine, in its chambers.

That is the important, that the vital matter; and I counsel you to take stock of your soul, to ask yourself, What am I within? The best way to answer that question is to ask another, What have we done for our fellow-men? That is the right glass with which we may look at ourselves. Whom have we blessed, whom have we helped, whom have we comforted? Is the world the better for our lives? Has that weary giant gained from our work a little rest, a little consolation, a little gaiety, a little more of gentle laughter, a little less of bitter tears?

If you have only attended to your own business or knowledge, if your ambition or success has been all in all to you, you cannot have done anything for sorrow-laden humanity. Selfishness never helped one human being a single step upon his way; nay, its certain result is to beat back or to maim some of our fellow-men. If it rule your inward life, the first question is easily answered. Your spiritual life has gained nothing, and everything you have gained in your outward life, by merely selfish effort is loss and ruin to your real life.

But, if business and knowledge have been second; if, while they are pursued, they are pursued under the rule of love; if their work is overmastered in its direction and in its impulse by justice, pity, and truth; if man is more to you than yourself, and God is to you seen in man,—your gain has then been

infinite. The Spirit of God is in you, for his Spirit is Love. That is begun in you which must develop forever. You do not look forward to, you have, immortal life. And that inward life is a fountain whose waters, clear, sweet, and refreshing, will flow through all the years to come, and all their work is blessing and comfort to mankind. Nor will you lose the blessing and the comfort of having loved. Your soul will not be filled with pictures of yourself, nor with the music of your own successes in the world, pictures and music which will sicken you to look on when age drives you to live within. It will be filled with pictures of the homes you have blessed, the lives you have saved, the peace and joy that you have brought to the restless and the broken-hearted. Its music will be the laughter of men, women, and children whom you have made happy. The trumpets of the great causes you have helped will blow their marches in your heart. Often you will hear clear, but as if over far-off waters, the ineffable tune of the movement of the human race marching to God's righteousness, the music of the whole universe as it moves in the love of God.

O happiness! if in even the smallest way we can look back and say with humility, but yet with certainty, because love always knows itself, "I have won more of love; my Master in me is the same Love which thrilled through Jesus Christ; the impulse of my soul is tenderness; the desire of my life, my very life itself, is self-sacrifice; my aspiration is to love more and more; everything in my outward life shall bow to love's demands; I know now what the Lover of the human race meant when he said, 'I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.'"

And now, having looked back, let us also look forward, but with the same thoughts in our hearts. What shall we gain, what shall be our fate in the years to come? With what thoughts shall youth and manhood and age welcome the future?

Some of you who are young are but beginning life. How will you live it? What shall be its means and motives? That is the gravest question as you look forward over the unvoyaged sea of the years to come. And we, who are older, are glad to welcome you as you come out of the harbor of home into the tumbling billows of the main. For many years now we have sailed the seas of life, and our ships have been driven to various shores and troubled with the siege of storms, and seen strange islands and strange adventures in diverse seas, from arctic unto tropic,—change and interchange of watching and

labor and rest. Sunshine and shadow is life, but yet the rough sailing has been better than anchorage in a stagnant calm. Movement and passion have been our comrades; trouble that rushed into joy, joy that prophesied sorrow and fulfilled the prophecy; darkness that sunlight of a new dawn divided; rest that the labor of the tempest rescued from sloth; steady steering in the gale, to keep which true every power was tested to the last resistance; sweet harborage where we refitted our ship and heard, when all had been done which was needful, the singing of the land wind in the tree tops which called us to hoist sail for a new voyage, and which to hear filled us with joy,—this has been ours, and to this—to life with all its change—we welcome you.

Your ships are lying ready for the out-path. All is done that you can do in the way of preparation. One part of youth is closed, and a whole unknown lies outspread before you. Knowledge has furnished you for the voyage; the experience of others is in your head; those you love have trimmed your vessel as they can; the sails are hoist and eager for the sea, and the wind favoring as it favors youth.

It ought to be a joyous hour. Take God your Father with you, and, since you are bright and happy, take him with you by thankfulness and praise. Praise him, for he has given you keen life, the spirit of discovery, and the passion for truth,—Hope who stands on the prow, Faith who grasps the helm, the enkindled crew of high thoughts and noble emotions which should man your ship on its way to help and save the lost.

And now we join you in your praise to God. Together, we praise him that he has put that desire to save and bless our fellows, who are laboring in the seas, deep into our heart,—the first and foremost object of our life's sailing. We praise him for the world of interest and work in which we live, for the struggle which calls upon our powers, for the storms which make us veterans of the sea of life, for the humanity among whom we labor, and for the love of men which we shall win by saving and by helping them. —*Stopford A. Brooke.*

It is this feeling of infiniteness that we crave, that we believe in, and sometimes, though rarely, find in human friendship. The deepest love leads us through and beyond itself into the Infinite Heart, whose calm throbbing steadies us with the permanence and peace of eternity. —*Lucy Larcom.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Oh, forward, forward, turn thy gaze,
Lift up thine eyes and see!
The New Year brings untrodden ways;
Thy God shall walk with thee.
Cast not a pensive look behind
To count thy sorrows o'er;
The New Year comes, and will unbind
Of joys and griefs its store.
Put off thy garments soiled and worn;
Put off affliction's bands,
And clothe thyself for New Year's morn
In raiment from God's hands.
The raiment of His Righteousness
Thy God for thee prepares;
This New Year, claim thy blessedness
And cast on Him thy cares:
And forward, forward, turn thy gaze;
Lift up thine eyes and see!
The New Year brings untrodden ways,
Thy God shall walk with thee.

—*Caroline Hazard.*

Let me feel that I am to be a lover. I am to see to it that the world is better for me, and to find my reward in the act.

Love would put a new face on this weary old world, in which we dwell as pagans and enemies too long, and it would warm the heart to see how fast the vain diplomacy of statesmen, the impotence of armies and navies and lines of defence, would be superseded by this unarmed child.

This great, overgrown, dead Christendom of ours still keeps alive at least the *name* of a lover of mankind. But one day all men will be lovers: and every calamity will be dissolved in the universal sunshine. —*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

There are two good rules which ought to be written upon every heart. Never believe anything bad about anybody, unless you positively know that it is true. Never tell even that, unless you feel that it is absolutely necessary, and that God is listening while you tell it. —*Henry Van Dyke.*

To love God and man proves to be not enough: there are other creatures to be taken account of. As it now appears, goodness and gentleness cannot stop at the line that separates human from other life. The heart that has attained to the highest sympathy will manifest its quality toward every creature it has to do with. —*Newton M. Mann.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

"Black Beauty" is offered by Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

For Young People.

"The Pioneers," Cooper; "Nidworth"; "The Birds' Christmas Carol"; "A Jacobite Exile"; "The Boy Knight," Henty; "Jessica's First Prayer"; "The Snow Image," Hawthorne; "The Book of Folk Stories"; "The Story of a Spring Morning"; "Thwarted"; "Little Old-time Sunday"; "Anthony Brade"; "Emily, the Peacemaker"; "Greek Heroes," Kingsley; "Young Folks' History of the United States"; "Rainbow and Lucky Stories," Jacob Abbott.

Miscellaneous.

"Landmarks of English History," Nicoll; "Outlines of the World's History," Swinton; "Shakespeare's Sonnets"; "Rasselas"; "A Singular Life," E. S. Phelps; "Biography of Roger Wolcott"; "Pilgrim's Progress"; "American Humor"; "The Pleasures of Life," Lubbock; "A Fair Maid of Marblehead"; "Ships that Pass in the Night"; "The Sky Pilot"; "Hamlet"; "Merchant of Venice"; *Atlantic Monthly*, *Century*, *McClure's*, and *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1907.

Miss C. L. Murdock, Boulevard Station, Boston, Mass. offers the following: "The Fountain," Lowell; "The Blacksmith," Longfellow; "Anglo-Israel"; "Book-keeping," Meserve; Dictionary, French-English; "Gradatim"; "Julius Cæsar"; "Merchant of Venice"; "On the Trail of Pontiac"; "At the Fall of Montreal"; "Letters of Mme. de Rémusat"; "Reminiscences of European Travel," Peabody; "Betty's Christmas Dream," Alcott; "Chat-terwell Stories"; "Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes"; "Mother Goose set to Music"; "The Owls' Tea Party"; "The Wonder Book," Hawthorne; "Editha's Burglar," F. H. Burnett; "Prairie Days," Mary B.

Sleight; "Susie's Sacrifice"; "Swiss Family Robinson"; "A Rambling Story," Mary Cowden Clarke; "An Old-fashioned Girl," Louisa M. Alcott; "Silver Pitchers," Louisa M. Alcott; "Sidney: Her Summer on the St. Lawrence," Anna Chapin Ray.

REQUESTS.

1. Mrs. Annie C. Hesla, Butler, Minnesota, asks for "Almost a Man" and "Almost a Woman."

2. Mrs. N. C. Gordon, North Platte, Nebraska, will be glad of any reading. Magazines are always acceptable; she will be especially glad to get "Kidnapped," Stevenson; and "Whose Home is the Wilderness," Long; for the children.

3. Mrs. A. D. Trevey, Naola, Virginia, is able to get out but little and asks for reading, either magazines or light reading.

4. "I would be glad to receive good books or magazines and letters, for myself and little girl Bessie, aged eleven years." Mrs. Florence Spencer, Reck, Oklahoma.

5. Mrs. W. B. H. Blandford, Dover, North Carolina writes: "I have just seen for the first time a copy of the *Cheerful Letter* and think the Exchange a grand organization. Since moving from Washington City I feel the loss of a public library. Rev. W. F. Galloway is pastor here, and his wife has been kind enough to pass on books and magazines. They expect to leave in a few weeks, and I would be glad if the Society would continue to favor Dover with visits of these standard periodicals and books. I would be glad to have any sent me. Our seven-year-old boy enjoys story-books."

6. Edith and Ethel M. Johnson, Tunwater, Washington, twins thirteen years old, would like to exchange post-cards with girls their age.

7. It has been quite a while since I wrote to the *Cheerful Letter*, so I will write again. This year my husband was voted in for a minister in our church here, and I wish to ask for a few books that might help him. First, a red-lettered reference Bible; secondly, Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. Any other book that might be of benefit to him would be appreciated. I have seven children now,—the oldest a boy nearly fourteen; baby a boy of fourteen months. Would also be pleased for the *Little Wanderers' Advocate*, girls' home or picture-books

for them, and the *International Sunshine* for myself, even after they have been read. (Mrs.) Jennie Roberson, Dodson, Virginia.

8. Mrs. Bessie S. Nolan, Elamsville, Virginia, will be glad of any reading.

9. Miss Florence Criste, Acto, Barton County, Georgia, would like the *Woman's Home Journal* and any articles on fancy-work.

10. Miss Lena Garrett, Nathalie, Virginia, will be glad of any reading.

11. Mrs. Eugenia Palmer, La Rue, Texas, feels we have forgotten her, as she has received no reading for a year. She will be glad to pass on any that is sent, as she has many opportunities. Her little four-year-old Pauline will be pleased with a suitable book.

12. Miss Annie L. Phillips, Spilman, Mason Coutny, West Virginia, has been prevented by sickness from writing sooner. Teaching in a small mining town, she is not only especially anxious for books for herself this winter, but is so situated as to be able to place any reading matter sent her at the disposal of many others. She requests particularly the following: any books by Amelie Rives, Lucas Malet, Miss M. G. McClelland, Christian Reid, Marion Harland, and Maurice Hewlett, any of the newer fiction; also current numbers of any of the standard magazines. Would be especially glad to have the *Ladies' Home Journal* each month.

13. Mrs. M. A. Strickland, Union City, Michigan, will be glad of cheery letters: she is a great sufferer and much discouraged.

14. Mrs. Chas. Connor, 1526 18th Street, Washington, D.C., would be very grateful for "The Lamplighter," by Mrs. Cummins.

15. Mrs. S. K. Hunt, 101 Nansell Street, Marietta, Georgia, would like very much to receive "In Tune with the Infinite," by Trine.

16. Miss B. W. Harris, Holladay, Virginia, is teaching in a country school and is anxious to obtain a Webster's International Dictionary.

17. Mrs. Sallie Thomas, Polkton, North Carolina, also asks for a dictionary.

18. I am rather tardy in expressing my thanks for your generous response to my request for souvenir postals. I have received a great many very pretty and interesting cards, and they have been a source of much pleasure to me during the summer, as I am kept constantly at home. I wish I could have answered every one personally, but it was impossible. The letters I have received have been very cheering and entertaining. The thought of the long dreary winter coming on is not pleasant to me, yet I shall find enough to do to keep me busy so that perhaps I shall not have time to think of being lonely. I see very few people during the winter months. Thanking you most sincerely for your kindness, I remain (Mrs.) Mary H. Lincoln, East Norton, Mass., R. F. D. Box 35.

19. Mrs. J. W. Burch of Sandidges, Virginia, asks that her mail be addressed to Mrs. Ida E. Burch, R. F. D. No. 2, Sandidges, Virginia.

20. Teddy Nash, Palmer, Illinois, desires a copy of "Robinson Crusoe."

The address of Mrs. C. E. Morrison is changed from Erie to Boulder, Colorado, R. F. D. 1, Box 142.

Miss Genevieve L. C. Dearing, Florence, Colorado, herself a "shut-in," offers to make motto cards, hand decorated, for any "shut-ins" who will write her that they would enjoy them.

Mrs. A. M. Hansberry, Renton, Wash., R. F. D. No. 2, would be glad to receive a magazine about gardening.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO OBEY.

(Continued from our Last Number.)

It might perhaps be supposed that to sit on such a seat as this, and count twice ten vibrations of the pendulum, would be an amusement rather than a punishment, and that it would have no efficacy at all as a penalty for wrong-doing. But it proved in reality to be very efficacious. It is astonishing how small a punishment will suffice in the training of a child, if it is only uniformly and faithfully enforced. At first Annie did indeed find it only an amusement to go to her prison. As soon, however, as the novelty was gone, it became a trouble to her to leave

her play and go and sit upon her stool under the shelf and count the vibrations. It is true that it took only a very few minutes to do it, but even those few minutes Annie did not like to spare.

In fact, Ellen expected that Annie would sometimes refuse to go to her punishment; and at first she did not know what she would do if such cases should occur, for she had no means of compelling her to go. Indeed, she felt as if she had no right to compel her to go.

It is probable, in fact, that Annie would have refused to submit to her punishment long before she did, had it not been for the influence of the commendation which Ellen bestowed upon her for her obedience when she did go.

For example, Ellen was always accustomed, when she went upstairs at night, for the purpose of putting Annie to bed, to talk with her and amuse her, telling her stories, answering her questions, explaining things to her that she did not understand, and finally, just before Annie was ready to go to sleep, hearing her repeat her evening prayer. Now it happened that on the evening of the first day after the prison had been established, Annie had gone to it three times, at Ellen's command, though the last time she had gone to it slowly and reluctantly. That night just before Annie was to say her prayer, Ellen said to her:—

"You have been a good girl to-day, to submit to your punishment. Whenever I sent you to prison, you always went. That was right. It is a great deal of trouble to you, I know, to leave your play and go and sit in that gloomy place and count the swingings of the pendulum, and there is nothing to make you go but your own sense of duty. If you were to refuse to go, I should not do anything to you. Only I should feel unhappy about it all the day, and you would feel unhappy too. You would feel unhappy more or less all day, and at night, when you lie down in your bed to say your prayer and go to sleep you, would feel more guilty and self-condemned even than you had during the day. I am glad you obeyed and submitted to your punishment. It was a trouble to you at the time, but now you feel satisfied and happy."

"Yes," said Annie, "and I mean to go and submit to my punishment every time."

"That is right," said Ellen. "I have sent you to prison three times to-day, and you obeyed every time, and twice you went *immediately*, and without making any objection, in exactly the right way."

Ellen said nothing in respect to the case in which Annie hesitated and delayed, when

about going to her prison, knowing how much more influence we can exert over others by commending them when they do right than by censuring them when they do wrong.

"Yes," said Annie, "and after this I mean to go immediately every time."

At the close of this conversation Annie repeated her evening prayer, and then Ellen bade her good night and left her to go to sleep.

There was another way by which Ellen obtained a great influence over Annie, and that was by doing a great deal to amuse her and promote her happiness almost every hour of the day. She was always on the watch to contrive some means for doing this. When Annie was in the room where Ellen was at work, Ellen would talk with her, tell her little stories, explain what she herself was doing and why she was doing it, and thus constantly occupy and amuse Annie's mind. She allowed Annie to help her a great deal in her work, and she did this in many cases where Annie's co-operation was in reality a hindrance rather than a help. If to be allowed to participate in what Ellen was doing would please Annie and occupy her mind, and so increase Ellen's influence over her, Ellen was always willing to submit to any little inconvenience which it might occasion to herself.

For example she would say:—

"Now, Annie, I am going down cellar to get some apples. Could you go down with me to carry the candle, and help me choose some good ones?"

Annie, of course, was always greatly pleased with any such commission as this. And, although her carrying the candle and helping to choose the apples rendered Ellen no real service, yet Ellen was always much pleased to have her go, since she saw how much Annie herself was gratified in being thus employed.—*Jacob Abbott, in "Ellen Linn."*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE CHICKADEE.

The chickadee, like many other birds, takes his name from his notes; from some of his notes, that is to say, for he has many others besides his best-known *chick-a-dee-dee-dee*. His most musical effort, regarded by many observers as his true song, sounds to most ears like the name *phæbe*,—a clear, sweet whistle of two or three notes, with what musical people call a minor interval between them. It is so strictly a whistle that any boy can imitate it well enough to deceive not only another boy, but the bird himself.

In late winter and early spring, especially when the chickadee is in a peculiarly cheerful frame of mind, it is very easy to draw him out by whistling these notes in his hearing. Sometimes, however, the sound seems to fret or anger him, and, instead of answering in kind, he will fly near the intruder, scolding *dee-dee-dee*.

He remains with us both summer and winter, and wears the same colors at all seasons.

Perhaps no wild bird is more confiding. If a man is at work in the woods in cold weather, and at luncheon will take a little pains to feed the chickadees that are sure to be more or less about him, he will soon have them tame enough to pick up crumbs at his feet, and even to take them from his hand.

Better even than crumbs is a bit of mince pie or a piece of suet. I have myself held out a piece of suet to a chickadee as I walked through the woods, and have had him fly down at once, perch on my finger, like a tame canary, and fall to eating. But he was a bird that another man, a woodcutter of my acquaintance, had tamed in the manner above described.

The chickadee's nest is built in a hole, generally in a decayed stump or branch. It is very pretty to watch the pair when they are digging out the hole. All the chips are carried away and dropped at a little distance from the tree, so that the sight of them, littering the ground, may not reveal the bird's secret to an enemy.

Male and female dress alike. The top of the head is black,—for which reason they are called black-capped chickadees or black-capped titmice,—and the chin is of the same color, while the cheeks are clear white. If you are not sure that you know the bird, stay near him till he pronounces his own name. He will be pretty certain to do it sooner or later, especially if you excite him a little by squeaking or chirping to him.

Although the chickadee is small and delicate-looking, he seems not to mind the very coldest of weather. Give him enough to eat, and the wind may whistle. He picks his food, tiny insects, insects' eggs, and the like, out of crevices in the bark of trees and about the ends of twigs, and so is seldom or never without resources. The deepest snows do not cover up his dinner-table. His worst days, no doubt, are those in which everything is covered with sleet.

One of his prettiest traits is his skill in hanging back downward from the tip of a swinging branch, or from the under side of a leaf, while in search of provender. As a small boy, who had probably been to the

circus, once said, "The chickadee is a first-rate performer on the flying trapeze."—*Bradford Torrey*.

A WAIF.

(For the *Cheerful Letter*.)

One day, some years since, I was out for a morning's ride on my bicycle, and on the homeward stretch, in a country road away from houses, I was suddenly joined by a dog who appeared at my side most unexpectedly. He behaved as if this were what he had had in view all along and as if he belonged to me. He was a tan-colored dog of nondescript breed, a mixture of setter and collie I should say, but he was a beautiful fellow, with appealing brown eyes, which were pretty steadily fixed on my face as we journeyed on together. I realized at once that here was no casual companionship, but that he meant to go with me to wherever I was bound.

Now I was on my way home, where were three cats, all inimical to dogs, and also a small bit of humanity, a young kitten, whose mother was invariably belligerent when performing her maternal duties. I certainly could not let him go home with me, and as certainly I could not abuse his trust by deserting him, even supposing I could evade a creature so evidently bent upon accompanying me. I did the usual thing in such cases; requesting him to go home, and pretending that we were parting company, although I knew all the time that nothing would induce him to leave me. Oh, but in the sequel something did! I could think of but one thing to do, although it commended itself more to my judgment than to my feelings.

Within a mile or so of my home is an endowed Home for stray dogs and cats, a place which is neatly kept, and where the animals are well cared for, but where, of necessity, they are much confined, and it was to this place that I planned to take my new friend. We journeyed along together most amicably, exchanging remarks as we went, and soon reached the lane which led from the public road to the Home, and here I dismounted and we walked together. About half-way to the house a large black dog jumped a wall and ran up to my companion and engaged him in very earnest conversation. They stood face to face for what seemed a long time, and, to my surprise, the tail of my especial dog began to droop, his confident, happy air abandoned him, and soon he turned in his tracks, and, tail between legs, loped steadily back the way we had come. My astonishment was

great. There was a look of determination about his whole figure as he fled that there was no mistaking. It told me plainly that no coaxing would bring him to me again, and that his faith in me was gone. I called and called and hurried after him, but he went steadily on, and I found that no blandishments could recall him, and soon he turned the corner and was lost to my view. What had the black dog said? It could be but one thing. He had warned him against the house to which I was leading him, and had perhaps told him that the dogs there had next to no liberty. He had evidently painted life there in colors as sombre as his own coat, and what I have told was the result of his eloquence.

I have thought often of my confiding companion and of his feelings at being obliged to take back his confidence in me, and I have heartily hoped that some good home gave him such a welcome as would in time restore his faith in human kindness. A. B. S.

MACK, THE PARROT.

(For the Cheerful Letter.)

This is short, if not sweet:—

I called out, "Mackie!"

"What?" he asked.

"I'd like to kiss you."

"Don't!"

At another time, when longing for affection, he asks,—

"Do you love the little boy?"

One morning he was awake too early. His favorite room was not yet warm enough for him. Noticing the fact, he said,—

"I think the fire is out."

Said one, "What a little old Betsy you are!"

"Is that Mackie?" he asked.

"Yes," was the reply. "You are a little ancient Betsey!"

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried Mack, delightedly, as if greatly pleased at having a new name.

One dark November afternoon he seemed dispirited, and I tried to cheer him with a little music. Beginning with a scale, I went on until he thought that I was going too high for my voice.

"Can you do that?" he asked. "I can't do it," adding, meditatively, "I forgot," as if he had once known how.

At noon, one day, Mack wished to go to the table, and uttered his usual ejaculations of uneasiness. Aunt Lu was busy at the time, and said, "In a moment."

His friend Ethel was near by, and attended to his wishes, whereupon he said, gratefully,—

"Ethel thought!"

As each member of the family enters the room, he utters his genial "Hulloa!" and likes to have the greeting returned in like fashion. If one has been absent for a while, on her return she is asked, "Got back?"

Listening to one who had been speaking through a telephone, he asked: "Is that all? Got through?"

Some workmen had been digging and carting stones in front of Mack's favorite window. On awakening, next morning, he inquired, "Where's the horse?"

A door slammed loudly in the house, and Mack asked, humorously, "Is that door shut?"

A young lady called who was very much perplexed about her affairs. Seeing her troubled countenance, Mack, who noticed that she was not interested in him as usual, exclaimed, with some alarm, "Is Mackie a bad boy?"

One of the family, going away for a few hours, took a hasty luncheon, sitting down to the table which was bare, except for the few dishes she was using. Noticing this bareness, Mack asked facetiously, "Would you like a table?"

When a little indisposed, he knows enough to avoid the dinner-table, and says nothing about coming in. At such a time he was once asked if he would join us, and his reply was a wise one:—

"I don't care about it, and I don't want to care about it."

As he would take no food, not even his sunflower seeds, I said:—

"I shall make his room quite warm, and put another blanket over his cage."

"I like that!" said Mack, gratefully; and next day he was crowing, singing, and talking as well as usual.—H. M. Knowlton.

WHERE THE FASHIONS COME FROM.

"The question where fashions come from is like the question where pins go to," said Pheasant. "Think of the thousands and millions of pins that are being used every year, and not one of them worn out. Where do they all go to? 'One would expect to find a pin mine somewhere.'"

"Victor Hugo says they go into the sewers in Paris," said Jenny.

"And the fashions come from a source about as pure," said I, from the next room. . . .

"Well, then," said Humming-Bird, "tell us all about everything,—how things come to be as they are. Who makes the fashions?"

"I believe it is universally admitted that, in the matter of feminine toilet, France rules the world," said I.

"But who rules France?" said Pheasant. "Who decides what the fashions shall be there?"

"It is the great misfortune of the civilized world, at the present hour," said I, "that the leadership of fashion is entirely in the hands of a class of women who could not be admitted into good society in any country. Women who can never have the name of wife, who know none of the ties of family, these are the dictators whose dress and equipage and appointments give the law, first to France, and through France to the civilized world. This is the reason why the fashions have such an utter disregard of all those laws of prudence and economy which regulate the expenditures of families. They are made by women whose sole and only hold on life is personal attractiveness, and with whom to keep this up at any cost is a desperate necessity. No moral quality, no association of purity, truth, modesty, self-denial, or family love comes in to hallow the atmosphere about them, and create a sphere of loveliness which brightens, as mere physical beauty fades. The ravages of time and dissipation must be made up by an unceasing study of the arts of the toilet. Artists of all sorts, moving in their train, rack all the stores of ancient and modern art for the picturesque, the dazzling, the grotesque, and so, lest these Circes of society should carry all before them, and enchant every husband, brother, and lover, the staid and lawful Penelopes leave the hearth and home to follow in their triumphal march and imitate their arts. Thus it goes in France; and in England, virtuous and domestic princesses and peeresses must take obediently what has been decreed by their rulers in the *demi-monde* of France; and we in America have leaders of fashion, who make it their pride and glory to turn New York into Paris, and to keep even step with everything that is going on there. So the whole world of womankind is marching under the command of these leaders.

"We have just come through a great struggle,* in which our women have borne a heroic part, have shown themselves capable of any kind of endurance and self-sacrifice; and now we are in that reconstructive state which makes it of the greatest consequence to ourselves and the world that we understand our own institutions and position, and learn that, instead of following

the corrupt and worn-out ways of the Old World, we are called on to set the example of a new state of society, noble, simple, pure, and religious; and women can do more towards this even than men, for women are the real architects of society.

"Viewed in this light, even the small, frittering cares of women's life—the attention to buttons, trimmings, thread, and sewing-silk—may be an expression of their patriotism and their religion. A noble-hearted woman puts a noble meaning into even the commonplace details of life. The women of America can, if they choose, hold back their country from following in the wake of old, corrupt, worn-out, effeminate European society, and make America the leader of the world in all that is good."—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

MARCH, 1840.

My dear James,—Mr. George Ripley is always asking me for some of your letters to read, and I looked them over; but found I could not well show them, particularly the best: so I gave him the journals that you used to send me, and he was very glad to get them. They seemed too good to remain forever in an old trunk.

Mr. Francis told me that he was at the ordination of Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Young preached the sermon which was levelled against the new school doctrines. Said he: "I like not this marriage of religion and philosophy. I forbid the banns!" After this Mr. Brownson has had the boldness to unite them in his new book of "The Infidel Converted." It is a pity that they were reduced to make a runaway match of it.

I hope you have written to Margaret. I have not seen her for weeks, as I have ceased to *assist* at the *Conversazione*. She has been reading to the ladies every Wednesday evening from Goethe's writings on Art, "The Propylea" and other books. I have not heard any of them and suppose it is much the same things that you used to read to me.

Miller, the millennium preacher, is making a great revival among the Baptists. The church here is open every night in the week. His view of things is that after next August no more persons can be admitted to conversion, so he is very busy till then. After that time the institutions of the world are to crumble to pieces, and in August, 1843, the world will be destroyed. Ever yours,

S. A. C.

* This was written soon after the close of the Civil War.

MILTON'S DEFENCE OF LIBERTY.

Cyriac, this three years' day these eyes,
 though clear,
 To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
 Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
 Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
 Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
 Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
 Against heaven's hand or will, or bate a jot
 Of heart or hope, but yet bear up and steer
 Right onward. What supports me, dost
 thou ask?

The conscience, Friend, to have lost them
 overplied

In Liberty's defence, my noble task,
 Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
 This thought might lead me through the
 world's vain mask,
 Content, though blind, had I no better
 guide.

—Sonnet xxii.

MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST."

That majesty which through thy work doth
 reign,
 Draws the devout, deterring the profane;
 And things divine thou treat'st of in such
 state,
 As them preserves and thee inviolate.
 At once delight and horror on us seize,
 Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease;
 And above human flight dost soar aloft,
 With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft!
 The bird named from that Paradise you sing,
 So never flags, but always keeps on wing.
 Where could'st thou words of such a com-
 pass find?

Whence furnish such a vast expense of mind?
 Just heaven thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
 Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight.

—Andrew Marvell.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

AN ACROSTIC.

All the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and written, one below the other, the diagonal beginning with the upper left-hand letter and ending with the lower right-hand letter

will spell the name of Dr. Grenfell's Hospital ship.

1. A river of California.
2. A town in Connecticut.
3. A city in Pennsylvania.
4. A famous siege of the Crimean War.
5. The residence of Sir Walter Scott.
6. An acute infectious disease.
7. A city in Rhode Island.
8. A famous mountain.
9. A legislative body.
10. A constellation.

II.

MAGAZINE PUZZLE.

1. A period of time.
2. One of the oceans.
3. A group of states.
4. A portrayer.
5. A knife.
6. The children's friend.
7. A view.
8. A citizen of the world.
9. What every one should have.
10. An old-time musician.
11. A companion of a witch.
12. Once in two weeks.

—Selected.

III.

HALF SQUARE.

1. A fast of forty days.
2. A Latin pronoun.
3. An adverb.
4. A consonant.

IV.

DOUBLE CROSS WORD ENIGMA.

(Requires two words for the answer.)

In harbor, but not in sea.
 In Gaul, but not in Rome.
 In race, but not in tent.
 In Ralph, but not in Bessie.
 In America, but not in Europe.
 In son, but not in boy.
 In conceal, but not in hide.
 In opinion, but not in lace.
 My whole gives the names of two Presidents of the United States.

V.

HISTORIC AMERICANS.

1. Cleansing and a measure.
2. Insane, myself, and a relative.
3. A chattering bird.
4. Honest and partly maudlin.
5. A city in England.
6. A concession.
7. A network and to move gently.
8. A story and an alternative.

—Every Other Sunday.

Answers to puzzles in the December number.

I. INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.—Christmas.

II. HEROES AND HEROINES.—1. Kidnapped. 2. Little Men. 3. Fair Maid of Perth. 4. Heart of Mid-Lothian. 5. Come and Find Me. 6. Wooing of Calvin Parks.

III. SUGGESTIONS.—1. Sir Walter Raleigh. 2. Achilles. 3. Benjamin. 4. Gladstone and Mary, Queen of Scots. 5. Ulysses. 6. Robinson Crusoe and Napoleon I. 7. Henry D. Thoreau. 8. Hawthorne.

IV. ADDITIONS.—1. M-ode. 2. C-old. 3. D-are. 4. B-e-l-t. 5. H-i-v-e.

V. HIDDEN CITIES.—1. Paris. 2. Mobile. 3. Quincy. 4. London. 5. Chicago.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The Editor asks POSTMASTERS who send notices of changes of address not to send these notices to the Editor, but to the Secretary, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The *Cheerful Letter* Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* should be sent to the secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Make checks payable to Lily Blunt Porter.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of the new chairman of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange is Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Headquarters of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, may be found there on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

There will be a meeting of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange on Friday, January 1st, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at 10.30 A.M. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The Editor would be glad to receive the number of the *Cheerful Letter* for July, 1893. Send directly to her address, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston.

THE HOME STUDY WORK of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange aims to help those who are without school advantages.

Lessons by correspondence will be given in any school subject to those who wish to continue their studies, but who are unable to attend school.

Requests for these lessons should be sent to Mrs. Annie F. Hudson, 2 Maple Place, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to Headquarters.

Chairman, Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Editor of "The *Cheerful Letter*," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary, Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.